



University of  
**Chester**

**Senses Matter:  
Spaces and Experiences  
of Cycling**  
Dr. Peter Cox

# My work: sociologies of cycling

- Interdisciplinary social sciences
- Cycling and Society Research Group
- Twin background: academic and professional
- Studying the spatial practices of cycling



# The Project: sensory ethnography



- Cycling as an embodied practice
- Measuring our sensory experiences
- Understanding their effects
- Methods:
  - Video ethnography
  - Biometric data recording
  - Traditional field notes

# Findings

- Film as field notes, not for display
- Basic data on speeds, acceleration, braking as expected
- Wide variations – not predictable
- Need for common understanding to prevent conflict





# Findings

- Response to urban design is emotional and pre-rational
- Routings and even trips often contingent
  - A single long wait or negative stimulus can change a journey
- Spaces create emotional responses that are exhibited in behaviours



# Implications

- Impact evaluation needed for all built interventions
- The sensory and emotional impact of interventions is important
- Sensory ethnography using film a useful methods to combine hard data and impressions



# Thankyou

Questions?

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